About A.C.T.

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER, a nonprofit organization in the heart of San Francisco, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and an ongoing engagement with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Ellen Richard, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.’s creative work.

A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967; more than 320 A.C.T. productions have since been performed to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Today A.C.T. is recognized internationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting, honored with a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training (1979) and the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award (1996).

The first actor training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree, A.C.T.’s conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, serves 3,000 students every year. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America’s actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.

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San Francisco’s Theater Company

American Conservatory Theater Founding General Director William Ball, at the forefront of the regional theater movement, wanted to create a company outside New York that would have a significant national impact while providing an alternative to commercial theater. After a group of San Francisco civic leaders attended A.C.T.’s West Coast debut at Stanford University in 1966, they invited Ball and his company to settle in San Francisco, which was without a resident theater company. A.C.T. has been dedicated to bringing the power of live theater to San Francisco audiences since the company’s first rousing performance of Ball’s Tartuffe in the Geary Theater (now called the American Conservatory Theater) on January 21, 1967.

A.C.T.’s majestic stage opened January 10, 1910, rising from the rubble of the catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906. It was immediately hailed as one of the grandest playhouses in the United States. In 1975 the Geary was awarded a place on the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Register of Historic Places and named a landmark of the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco. In 1989 the Loma Prieta earthquake ripped a gaping hole in the ceiling, destroying the proscenium arch and dumping tons of equipment and debris on the first six rows of orchestra seats. Nevertheless, A.C.T.’s second artistic director, Edward Hastings (who succeeded Ball in 1986), never considered canceling the season. For the next six years, A.C.T. performed in seven different venues around the city. “We had to encourage people to come back to this devastated, ravished, magical place called San Francisco,” remembered Hastings. “And what they found in the theater were a lot of other people who were shook up. So there we were, all together in a theater, helping bring the city back together again.”

With the support of a community that contributed to a record-breaking $28.5 million capital campaign, the Geary reopened in 1996 with a production of The Tempest directed by A.C.T.’s current artistic director, Carey Perloff, who took over after Hastings retired in 1992. Committed to proving that theater is still “a place where language is kept alive and functional and muscular and breathing,” Perloff reconfirmed A.C.T.’s mission to expose San Francisco to exceptional works from across our rich theatrical tradition. She reintroduced the core acting company (which had been disbanded decades earlier) to keep top-quality local actors working, and she committed herself to “locavore” theater—theater made by, for, and about the community that supports it—with San Francisco–centered productions like After the War, The Tosca Project, and the much-beloved 2011 hit Armistead Maupin’s Tales of the City.

Since the company’s founding, A.C.T. has infused the Bay Area with some of the best young acting talent in the nation. The company first began training outside actors in the summer of 1967, and by 1969, the conservatory had expanded to include a year-long course of study, which has since evolved into the three-year, fully accredited, top-ranked Master of Fine Arts Program. M.F.A Program students often grace the mainstage and return to perform at A.C.T. as alumni; they are also regulars on stages around the Bay Area and beyond. Other programs include the Young Conservatory, which offers training and performance opportunities for students ages 8 to 19; Studio A.C.T., which offers acting classes for adults; and the Summer Training Congress, which attracts students from around the world.

With the arrival of distinguished Executive Director Ellen Richard, the recent conclusion of a long-range strategic planning process, the introduction of an education department, and the opening of a new performance space (The Costume Shop, located in the Mid-Market neighborhood across from UN Plaza), A.C.T. is poised to continue its leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco—and the nation.
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Davies After Hours, a post-concert music event, begins immediately after the March 16 concert in the Second Tier lobby-turned-lounge. Free to ticketholders.

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Dear Friends,

From the moment I saw an early incarnation of **Humor Abuse** in New York, there was no question in my mind that I wanted Lorenzo to bring this magical piece to A.C.T. In recent years, A.C.T. has been making a big investment in Bay Area stories, from Philip Kan Gotanda’s *After the War* to my *Tosca Cafe* (created with Val Caniparoli) to the recent hit musical *Armistead Maupin’s Tales of the City*. There are so many lenses through which to view our lives in this part of the world, and each of these works has added a new facet to the larger prism.

**Lorenzo Pisoni** literally grew up in a trunk. And the trunk belonged to a circus that helped alter the landscape of the American theater and the American circus. Many of you came to know the **Pickle Family Circus** through the inspired acts of its original clown trio—Lorenzo Pickle (Larry Pisoni), Mr. Sniff (Geoff Hoyle), and Willy the Clown (Bill Irwin). Last season’s comic gem *Scapin* was adapted and directed by Bill, and he invited many Pickle stalwarts (including Geoff, choreographer Kimi Okada, and musicians Randy Craig and Keith Terry) to reunite on the A.C.T. stage to tell Molière’s madcap tale of servants and masters. Now, with **Humor Abuse**, we have the unique pleasure of catching up with the next generation of Pickles, with the little boy who started performing with San Francisco’s beloved circus at the age of two.

That boy (the son of Pickle cofounders Larry Pisoni and Peggy Snider), Lorenzo Pisoni, is now an accomplished actor with a wonderful national career; he was last seen on the A.C.T. stage in our 2005 production of *Scapin*. Somewhere along the way, Lorenzo decided to resurrect the variety show that he and Geoff Hoyle’s son, Jonah, had created in college. The result, **Humor Abuse**, recreated as a one-man play with a rarely produced Beckett comedy called *Endgame*, in which two women (a wife and a mistress) fight for the affections and attention of the man they both vilify and are forced to share. It is a work unique in Beckett’s canon, a kind of soap-opera-on-speed, in which a beam of light illuminates the faces of three characters trapped in life-sized urns and forces them to confess to their adulterous shenanigans.

I originally wanted this production of *Endgame* to be part of my upcoming **20th Anniversary Season**, but when we discovered that Bill’s time was already spoken for, we grabbed a window this spring in which he was available, deciding to postpone our previously announced production of *Twelfth Night* in order to accommodate. We are grateful to all of you with tickets to *Twelfth Night* for your understanding, and we hope you are as excited as we are about this opportunity.

In preparation for my **20th Anniversary Season**, I have been giving a great deal of thought to these 20 years of adventure at A.C.T. An anniversary is a wonderful time to reflect, but it’s also a crucial time to invest in the future, by discovering thrilling new work and by celebrating our remarkable M.F.A. Program actors, who grow more central to A.C.T.’s life with every season. Over the next few months, we will begin sharing with you our preparations for the work ahead, which will include reunions with some of the most beloved artists in A.C.T.’s recent history.

In the meantime, January is a hugely busy month for us, with **Humor Abuse** on the mainstage, two productions (*Higher* and *Scorched*) in rehearsals, the Sky Festival in full swing in our school, and much more. As always, we invite you to sample the wide array of experiences that being part of A.C.T. entails, and we thank you enormously for your support and commitment.

Yours,

Carey Perloff, Artistic Director
Take your theatergoing experience to new heights.

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Humor Abuse

Created by Lorenzo Pisoni and Erica Schmidt
Directed by Erica Schmidt
Performed by Lorenzo Pisoni

Lighting Designer Ben Stanton
Sound Designer Bart Fasbender
Stage Manager Hannah Cohen
Assistant Stage Manager Kimberly Mark Webb

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

Humor Abuse runs approximately 80 minutes without an intermission.

This production is made possible at A.C.T. by

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Humor Abuse was originally produced in the United States by Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, artistic director; Barry Grove, executive director) on February 19, 2009. Humor Abuse was developed during a residency at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center.
Preserving the Pickles

BY EMILY MEANS

By the time Humor Abuse’s Lorenzo Pisoni was six years old, he was a contracted member of his parents’ Pickle Family Circus. Born and raised a Pickle, he was exposed to the inner workings of a world many of us can only dream about, a world in which, as Lorenzo says, “there are no limits. You can do whatever you think of.”

Lorenzo’s parents, Pickle cofounders Larry Pisoni and Peggy Snider, met while working at The San Francisco Mime Troupe in the early 1970s. They began juggling together, performing and passing the hat in Union Square. Larry had moved to California from Manhattan with dreams of establishing his own circus company, and he convinced Peggy to join him in the endeavor. Together, they gathered a band of diverse performers—unicyclists, acrobats, jugglers, musicians, and clowns—and the Pickle Family Circus opened in May 1975 in the gym of John O’Connell High School in San Francisco’s Mission District. After that, they moved the show outdoors.

From the beginning, the Pickles made deliberate decisions that set them apart from traditional American circus. Unlike the business-minded big-top conglomerates, the Pickles staged performances in a single ring, without circus animals, and on an intimate scale that embraced and empowered audience members. Peggy remembers, “It was a way of leveling so that there was not really a vast difference between the audience and circus performer. It was a way of saying, ‘If you want to do something, you can do it. We are not extraordinary individuals. We are just like you.’”

The Pickles also embraced the communities from which their audiences came. Working out of circus headquarters in an old church on Potrero Hill, the troupe routed its tours based on the locations of the nonprofit community groups with which they partnered, which received a large percentage of total ticket sales and made money from concessions. Their first performance benefited Latino daycare centers in San Francisco, and up and down the West Coast they collaborated with senior centers, food pantries, and many other organizations.

With all the spirit of a neighborhood circus thrown together in somebody’s backyard, the Pickles relied on more than just the talent of its performers, who were responsible for every aspect of their business. Everyone pitched in to keep the show running, whether it meant assembling bleachers or hanging canvas, building props or personally mentoring sponsoring groups. Terry Lorant, Pickle performer and photographer, reflected on this all-for-one, one-for-all philosophy in an interview with San Francisco Chronicle columnist Jon Carroll: “We never considered saying, ‘Forget it.’ There was some intensity—maybe insane—group pride that enabled us to do things that none of us individually would have ever thought of attempting.” This mentality permeated the lives of the Pickles, but also extended, as Peggy Snider told Carroll, “beyond the large group of Pickles past and present. It reaches out and embraces the audience, and the sponsors, and the towns that we visit.” The Pickle Family Circus was an all-inclusive celebration, founded by two visionaries who fell in love—not only with the circus, but also with each other.

Larry and Peggy married, and Lorenzo was literally born into the circus; he grew as the circus did. With a large extended family of civically minded artists, he was one of several Pickle kids who spent their childhoods on the road in backstage “tent cities,” learning tricks of the trade from a “kiddy corral” watched over by whoever was not onstage. “Everyone in the company was always having a good time,” Lorenzo remembers. “I think that is maybe the rarest thing I experienced as a child. I don’t know many kids who not only have a firsthand knowledge of what their parents do on a day-to-day basis, but also get to see their parents enjoying what they do—see any adults enjoying what they do.”

The adults were having such a good time, in fact, that Lorenzo could not wait to participate. “He wanted to do it all,” Larry remembers. “He wanted to do the acrobatics and the juggling. He wanted to clown; he wanted to play music.” At age two, Lorenzo began going onstage during intermission. Peggy remembers, “He knew the cues. The band would finish the tune that signaled it was time for intermission and he would pick up his suitcase, have his top hat on, part the curtains, march to the center of the ring—and begin.” His earliest acts were, according to his mom, “adorable” imitations of what he saw the adults do: wholehearted attempts at tumbling, clowning, and juggling.

Lorenzo was an earnest performer who understood early that the circus was serious business. His ability to exude authority from a young age made him the perfect straight man for his father’s clown—Lorenzo Pickle—to undermine. After Lorenzo signed on at age six, he and his father performed as partners for many seasons. “He was a little pro early on. He worked hard,” Larry says. “I could trust him onstage.”

When Larry left the Pickles in 1987, Lorenzo inherited a strong sense of responsibility for the circus his father helped start. Whenever he could, the 11-year-old inserted himself into the roles his father would have performed, both onstage and off. “If they would have let me drive the bleacher truck, I probably would have jumped at the chance,” he remembers.

Lorenzo continued to perform with the Pickle Family Circus throughout his teenage years, even while attending high school full time. School introduced him to a world of possibilities outside the family business: “I think that’s when I realized, ‘Oh,
I’m not going to do circus for the rest of my life.’ Although I never would have admitted it then, because it was my identity.”

Matriculation at Vassar College across the country in upstate New York meant a fresh start for the Pickle kid. He chose to keep his unique upbringing a secret, but his anonymity was short-lived: a director called his apartment and left a message on the answering machine asking whether he wanted to be ringmaster of a circus in Tokyo. His roommates intercepted the call, and Lorenzo was forced to admit the truth. They were incredulous until he did a backflip.

After graduation, Lorenzo worked as a ringmaster in a Las Vegas Cirque du Soleil show before moving to New York to pursue an acting career. After many years of success, he decided to resurrect an old idea for a show, one that had begun as a couple of anecdotes he and fellow Pickle kid Jonah Hoyle (son of Pickle clown Geoff Hoyle) had contributed to a one-night benefit act they performed as teenagers alongside their dads. They were anecdotes about growing up in the circus and being “abused in the name of humor.”

At Vassar, Lorenzo and Jonah had merged versions of these “humor abuse” monologues with old Pickle routines and a performed history of clowning. When Lorenzo approached Jonah about reviving the piece as adults, Jonah declined: “Lorenzo’s story was the story of the Pickles. . . . I told him that he should make it a solo show. And that he should make it as personal and as honest as he could.”

With the help of director, writer, and Vassar friend Erica Schmidt, Lorenzo set out to do just that. Erica focused on the autobiographical elements, helping Lorenzo to see what was already there: the story of a father and a son. The show was produced by Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City Center—with Larry in the audience.

Lorenzo’s dad knew, more or less, what to expect, but Lorenzo had never shown him the script, which included a number of intimate thoughts he had never expressed directly to his father. It was an emotional experience for them both. “I don’t know that he quite knew how to process it,” says Lorenzo. “I really do think [the piece is] loving and celebratory. . . . He did a really great job as a parent, and he’s a great clown.” “I am just incredibly proud,” Larry says of Lorenzo’s performance in *Humor Abuse*. “I think it is really quite a wonderful gift. It is what I had to pass on to him, and I did.”

During performances of *Humor Abuse*, Lorenzo sometimes hears an audience member laugh and knows that there is a Pickle in the house. It is the laughter of someone who has been reminded of something forgotten. Lorenzo is happy to remind us: “I love that the Pickles can live on in some way. I love that I’m using the circus’s original backdrop in the show, and I love that I’m using props that my parents built and used in the ring. It’s a little walk down memory lane for a lot of people.” Lorenzo included.
Bill Irwin Joins the 2011–12 Season in Endgame

A.C.T. Associate Artist Bill Irwin joins our 2011-12 season in an evening of two landmark plays by modernist master Samuel Beckett. A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff will direct the production, which includes Endgame, Beckett’s moving comedy about the approaching end of life and the fear that the end will never arrive, and the comic gem Play, a rarely performed tour de force about marriage and infidelity. Play will feature A.C.T. core acting company members René Augeesen, Anthony Fusco, and Annie Purcell.

Irwin was an original member of San Francisco’s Pickle Family Circus—known for his famous Willy the Clown persona—and was later an important role model for Humor Abuse’s Lorenzo Pisoni when he first set out to become a professional actor. As Pisoni says, Irwin “blazed the trail” for circus clowns who wanted to break into theater, film, and television.

Irwin’s impressive body of work for the stage includes the comic audience-participation escapade Fool Moon (created and performed with David Shiner), which was seen on the American Conservatory Theater stage in 1998 and 2001 and won Irwin a special Tony Award for Live Theatrical Presentation. He also won a 2005 Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play for his performance of George in the revival of Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, one of many Broadway appearances that include Beckett’s Waiting for Godot, Bye, Bye Birdie, and Accidental Death of an Anarchist. The 2003-04 Signature Theatre season was devoted to his original work. Other A.C.T. appearances include 2001’s Texts for Nothing—Irwin’s powerful interpretation of Beckett’s prose meditations on human existence—and last season’s turn as the mischievous title character in Molière’s Scapin, which he also adapted and directed. Impressed by his performance as the Fool in The Public Theater’s 2011 production of King Lear, the New York Times hailed the Bay Area favorite as “an actor deeply steeped in the traditions of clowns, according to both the commedia dell’arte and Samuel Beckett.”

“Endgame’s depth of emotion—the portrait of our longing for strong, clear feeling, and our fear of it at the same time—is fearsome,” says Irwin. “The Beckett view of parent-child relations makes the play so compelling to me now, and so funny. I’m scared, but so excited to be coming to A.C.T. to work on Endgame with Carey and to put it before A.C.T. audiences.”

Perloff, who directed Beckett’s Waiting for Godot at A.C.T., says: “It was in Endgame that Beckett famously wrote, ‘Nothing is funnier than unhappiness.’ I cannot think of a more consummate artist than Bill Irwin to demonstrate that fact, undertaking the lead role of Hamm in this astonishing play. Endgame is a play Bill and I have wanted to do together for many years; when the opportunity suddenly presented itself to do it this season, we could not say no. I am thrilled to present Endgame in tandem with Play, which will give our core acting company a chance to shine a spotlight on a hilarious tale of marriage and adultery that represents a very different side of Beckett’s oeuvre. This Beckett pairing will add a rich chapter to A.C.T.’s explorations of the great modernists, Beckett and Pinter.”

Endgame and Play run May 9–June 3, at the American Conservatory Theater (415 Geary Street, San Francisco). Tickets (starting at $10) are available by calling the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or at www.act-sf.org.
A.C.T. Preview: Scorched

Wajdi Mouawad’s play Scorched, which makes its West Coast premiere at A.C.T. this February, takes us on a suspenseful journey to the Middle East, layering the shocking effects of war with rich, poetic, and deeply human storytelling. In a beautiful translation by distinguished Canadian writer Linda Gaboriau—who has translated more than 100 French-Canadian plays and novels into English, including Michel Tremblay’s For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, seen at A.C.T. in 2002—Scorched tells the story of twin siblings Janine and Simon, whose estranged mother, Nawal, sets them off on a life-changing mission.

In this modern Greek tragedy, Mouawad weaves a riveting mystery into a complex, captivating tapestry, inviting us to slowly unravel the astonishing truth along with the characters. Leaving instructions in her will, Nawal requests that her children return to her homeland to discover the truth about the father they thought long dead and the brother they never knew they had. Their journey takes them across continents and through more than 50 years of dangerous history.

In many ways, Scorched is the ultimate example of theatrical globalization. An epic work originally written in French by a Lebanese-born writer who currently resides in Canada, it has received more than 100 productions (in multiple languages) across the world. “Scorched brings the turmoil and tribalism of the Middle East to the forefront for the first time at A.C.T.,” says A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, who will direct the show on the A.C.T. mainstage. “Mouawad is a major new writer whose work is acclaimed internationally but relatively unknown in the United States,” she says. “We are thrilled to introduce him to the Bay Area.”

Variety praised Scorched’s “intensely personal [and] poetic” language and ability to find “beauty in the darkest moments,” while Canada’s CBC News called it “heart-wrenching [and] jaw-dropping.” Adapted into the feature film Incendies (the play’s original French title), it was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 2011 Academy Awards.

The cast of A.C.T.’s production of Scorched includes Academy Award nominee and Emmy Award winner David Strathairn (Good Night and Good Luck, Temple Grandin), who will play Alphonse Lebel, the good-natured notary public who is the executor of Nawal’s will and a guide for her two children. Strathairn previously appeared at A.C.T. in The Tempest, the first production on the mainstage after it was renovated following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

Scorched will also feature several celebrated Middle Eastern actors: Babak Tafti will play the twin brother, Simon, and Marjan Neshat and Jacqueline Antaramian will play Nawal at various ages. The cast also includes four members of A.C.T.’s core acting company—Manoel Felciano, Nick Gabriel, Omozé Idehenre, and Annie Purcell, who will play the twin sister, Janine—and Apollo Dukakis (brother of A.C.T. Associate Artist Olympia Dukakis).
Higher Wins Award

A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff has received this year’s Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award for her new play Higher, which opens in San Francisco this February. One of the largest awards for playwriting in the country, the Theatre Visions Fund Award includes financial support for the world premiere production and two new-play commissions out of A.C.T. “It’s an incredible honor to have Higher chosen from among many wonderful plays,” says Perloff. “I am extremely grateful to the Laurie Foundation for its support.”

Perloff has been developing Higher with A.C.T. Associate Artistic Director Mark Rucker—who will direct the premiere—for two years, beginning with a workshop at New York Stage and Film, followed by workshops at the Asolo Repertory Theatre in Florida and the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco last fall.

In Higher, Michael and Elena are two American architects who dive into a high-stakes competition to design a memorial in Israel. They’re also in love—but don’t know that they are vying against one another. Higher whisks us from sleek New York studios to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, as the architects confront their own pasts in a race to make their mark on history.

Perloff says her inspiration for the piece was born in part out of her fascination with architects and “with the kind of obsession it can take to imagine and create a signature building.” She continues, “I began to imagine how much more complicated the process could become when love, desire, betrayal, and professional jealousy became involved. It’s also a play about memory, and loss, in a particularly Jewish context.”

She adds, “After collaborating with Mark Rucker on a site-specific reading at the Contemporary Jewish Museum last year, I’m thrilled to finally have a chance to see the play come alive in a full production in San Francisco.”

Higher will feature Concetta Tomei (The Elephant Man, Noises Off, and Goodbye Fidel on Broadway; Providence on television) as Valerie Rifkind, the wealthy widow who commissions the memorial for her late husband. She woos Michael, a high-powered architect who has made his career creating memorials, but she is also impressed by the eagerness of Elena, even though she has no memorials to her credit. A.C.T. associate artist Andrew Polk (most recently seen at A.C.T. in last season’s production of The Homecoming and 2009’s Mamet comedy, November) and A.C.T. core acting company member René Augesen will play Michael and Elena, lovers whose divergent ideas about how to honor the dead may just drive their relationship apart. The cast will be rounded out by Alexander Crowther (seen on the A.C.T. mainstage this season in Once in a Lifetime and A Christmas Carol), who will play the young Israeli, Jacob Stein, whose father died in the same event that killed Valerie’s husband; and Ben Kahre (who recently made his mainstage debut as Ghost of Christmas Past in Carol), who will play Michael’s estranged son, Isaac. Crowther and Kahre are both members of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2012.
A.C.T.’s Inaugural Conservatory Awards

We are proud to announce the creation of the A.C.T. Conservatory Awards, which will annually recognize and honor outstanding alumni of A.C.T.’s actor training programs and pay tribute to donors who have provided significant support to the M.F.A. Scholarship Fund. This year’s winners are: four-time Academy Award-nominated actress and A.C.T. graduate Annette Bening; recent A.C.T. graduate Elizabeth Banks; Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott, who cofounded Los Angeles’s acclaimed classical theater company A Noise Within with fellow A.C.T. graduate Art Manke; celebrated San Francisco philanthropists and longtime A.C.T. supporters Frannie and the late Mort Fleishhacker; and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, which has provided multiyear scholarship support for the M.F.A. Program.

“I am thrilled that we are able to launch this amazing annual event with Annette Bening, who has long been a face of A.C.T.’s training programs, and Elizabeth Banks, whose well-earned success makes us very proud to call her our own,” says A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith. “I am also moved that we are able to honor individuals and foundations who make it possible for us to accept and support the most talented students within our program whatever their financial situation. It is the rare combination of passionate artistry and passionate philanthropy that we are celebrating with these awards, and I hope that they will inspire ongoing interest in the nurturing of American acting talent for the future of our profession.”

“My years as a student and actress at A.C.T. gave me rigorous training and the chance to spread my wings working as a member of a top-notch repertory company,” says Bening, who will receive the inaugural Edward Hastings Career Achievement Award. She adds, “A.C.T. was an intellectual, spiritual, and psychological hotbed of theater passion. A.C.T. will always be home.” “My time at A.C.T. has been integral to my life as a professional working actor,” says Banks, who will receive the inaugural Rising Star Award. “A.C.T. provided a creatively robust environment in which to develop my passion for storytelling, and during my time, the whole place was run by broads. I was always inspired by that!”

The inaugural Conservatory Awards Luncheon, co-chaired by A.C.T. Trustee Abby Schnair and Trustee Emeritus Deedee McMurtry, will be held on Tuesday, January 24. Proceeds raised at the luncheon will support M.F.A. Program scholarships. These esteemed artists and generous philanthropists will be present to receive their awards:

- **Annette Bening**
  The Edward Hastings Career Achievement Award

- **Elizabeth Banks**
  The Rising Star Award

- **Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**
  (cofounders of A Noise Within theater company)
  The Contribution to the Field Award

- **Frannie Fleishhacker**
  The Benefactor Award

- **William Randolph Hearst Foundation**
  The Champion Award

For more information about the Conservatory Awards, contact A.C.T. Conservatory Development Manager Helen Rigby at 415.439.2469 or hrigby@act-sf.org.

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From exhilarating talkbacks and fabulous parties to invigorating volunteer opportunities, there are many ways to get involved at A.C.T.

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The intersection of world-class artists, powerful performances . . . and you! These lively events take you inside every A.C.T. production—all season long.

Please join us at the following FREE events surrounding *Humor Abuse*. Simply show your *Humor Abuse* ticket for entry.

**ACT-SF.ORG/INTERACT**

- **Prologue**
  - JAN 17, 5:30PM
  - Come early for a preshow discussion with director Erica Schmidt and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

- **Audience Exchanges**
  - JAN 24, 7PM/JAN 29, 2PM/FEB 1, 2PM
  - Stick around for a lively Q&A session with Lorenzo Pisoni and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

- **OUT with A.C.T.**
  - JAN 25, 8PM
  - The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy drinks and treats at this popular afterparty.

- **A.C.T. Family Series**
  - FEB 4
  - New this season! Join us for a lively, interactive workshop on clowning before the matinee performance.

  *All discussions are free for *Humor Abuse* ticket holders. Please note that performance times vary.*

Become a Donor

Engage with the artists, attend exclusive behind-the-scenes events, and take an inside look at the theatrical process.

**ACT-SF.ORG/DONATE**

- **Humor Abuse Saturday Salon**
  - JAN 28
  - Enjoy a catered luncheon and informative Q&A session with a member of the artistic team.

- **Scorched Opening Night Dinner**
  - FEB 22
  - Join us for cocktails and dinner with director Carey Perloff and A.C.T. Executive Director Ellen Richard.

To support A.C.T. and receive invitations to donor events, contact Jonathan Frappier at jfrappier@act-sf.org or 415.439.2355.

Volunteer

Play a key role! A.C.T. volunteers provide an invaluable service with their time, enthusiasm, and love of theater. Current opportunities include helping out at our reception desk and ushering at A.C.T. productions.

**ACT-SF.ORG/VOLUNTEER**

Conservatory Awards Luncheon **JAN 24**

Please join us for the first annual Conservatory Awards Luncheon, recognizing and honoring outstanding alumni of A.C.T. and paying tribute to donors who have provided significant support to the M.F.A. Scholarship Fund. This event will raise much-needed annual support for M.F.A. Program scholarships while bringing like-minded supporters of the Conservatory together with the award winners and with current M.F.A. Program students to celebrate the presentation of these prestigious awards.

Contact Helen Rigby at 415.439.2469 or hrigby@act-sf.org.
In Memory of Mort Fleishhacker
A Champion of San Francisco Arts

The A.C.T. family mourns the loss of one of our truest champions, Mortimer Fleishhacker III, who passed away on October 25 from complications resulting from a series of strokes. Along with his wife of 56 years, Frannie, Mort continued his family’s legacy of ensuring the permanence of San Francisco’s premiere theater company, which his father, Mortimer Fleishhacker, Jr., helped bring to the city in 1967. Mort and Frannie were instrumental in the reconstruction of the American Conservatory Theater (then known as the Geary) after it suffered extensive damage from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and they continued A.C.T.’s pursuit of stability by generously supporting and advocating for a long-term endowment. Passionate about the future of the dramatic art form, Fleishhacker was a huge believer in the importance of the A.C.T. Conservatory. “He really steered our strategic thinking,” says A.C.T. President of the Board Rusty Rueff. “It’s a big loss for our institution. I feel like we’ve lost one of our forefathers.”

Fleishhacker was a longtime subscriber and donor, and after joining A.C.T.’s board of trustees in 1990 he served on nearly every committee. A ceremony held in his honor took place on the American Conservatory Theater stage in October. “It is fitting for a celebration of Mort’s life to be on this stage,” commented Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan, who officiated. “It was so loved by him.”

“He would have loved this full house,” said A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff at the event, speaking on behalf of our trustees, actors, staff members, and audience members, as well as “artists all over the Bay Area, who have been touched for decades by the Fleishhacker family and their philanthropy and passion for education and the arts”:

Mort cast a very long shadow at A.C.T. He was involved in so many things, starting with the building you are sitting in. He was also a very passionate lover of our conservatory. He was a member of the Conservatory Committee [of the board], and for many, many years, he and Frannie have supported a scholarship for a Master of Fine Arts Program student. He loved the students he supported and deeply believed that young artists going out into the world to tell their stories make the world a richer and more empathetic place.

Mort had an instinctive and native appreciation for both the risks of theater and the rewards that it could yield. He came to see shows and sent me fabulous critiques, and they were always razor sharp and in the spirit of generosity, because he was there to make us better. He knew we could be bigger, we could be better, we could be smarter, we could be more articulate, we could do more for the community if we picked our heads up and thought better and really kept our eyes open. I loved that about him, and I know that the legacy he leaves for all of us is enormous.

The Fleishhackers have been a part of San Francisco history since Mort’s great-grandfather, a pioneer in the development of land and mining in Nevada, arrived here in 1851. After graduating from Princeton University in 1954 with a B.S.E. in chemical engineering, Mort served in the army before earning an M.B.A. from UC Berkeley in 1957. Taking on his family’s commitment to improving the Bay Area, he was a member of the Fleishhacker Foundation board for many decades. He served as president of Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco (a role his father also held); he was also president of The San Francisco Development Fund, involved in programs creating new low- and moderate-cost housing and development lending. He was a leader in numerous local organizations, including the World Affairs Council of Northern California, the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), the Albion Foundation, the Greenbelt Alliance, the San Francisco Jewish Family Services Agency, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bay Area, and The Guardsmen. He did not flaunt his philanthropic work, says his son, Marc: “He only did it because he thought his contribution to the community was extremely important.”

Fleishhacker was a globetrotter, a skiing enthusiast, and a lover of fine wines and good grammar. He “had a passion for clarity and elegance of utterance,” said Perloff, “because he believed that, if you could articulate your thinking well, you had a chance of moving the world forward. I really believe that Mort held true to that all his life.”

Fleishhacker is survived by his wife, Frannie (who has graciously taken up the mantle by joining the A.C.T. Board of Trustees); sister, Delia; brother, David; three children, Leslie, Sandi, and Marc; and eight grandchildren.
A.C.T. Mourns YC Benefactor Helen Palmer

A.C.T. mourns the loss of Helen Palmer—or, as she preferred to be called, Bug—who, along with her husband, Richard Palmer, was connected to A.C.T. almost since its founding as a subscriber, donor, and steadfast supporter of the Young Conservatory. In 1988, after her grandson, Lex Wolf, took summer acting classes in the YC, Bug began a long and generous association with the youth of A.C.T. The YC’s New Plays Program began in 1989 with its first commissioned play, Ascension Day, by Timothy Mason: When there were no resources to house the playwright, Bug welcomed Mason into her home. A series of artist residencies in the Palmer household followed, which included the care, feeding, and nurturing of some of America’s most promising and prominent playwrights.

“Bug was the YC’s angel,” says YC Director Craig Slaight. “Her never-tiring efforts to support young people engaging in art had no equal. Bug will be greatly missed and long remembered by the entire A.C.T. family.”

The Sad Loss of an A.C.T. Graduate

Last December, Stafford Alan Clark-Price, Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2001, passed away at the age of 36 after a year-and-a-half battle with cancer. During his time at A.C.T., Clark-Price performed in more than a dozen productions, and after graduating he went on to have a successful acting career. Some of his favorite roles included Jan in Rock ‘n’ Roll at The Studio Theatre in Washington, D.C., Robert Graves in The Oxford Roof Climber’s Rebellion at Urban Stages in New York, and Charlie in Mary’s Wedding at Delaware Theatre Company.

Conservatory Director Melissa Smith remembers how Clark-Price stayed in touch after leaving San Francisco: “He would come back and visit periodically, so I had the privilege of seeing him evolve and develop into this incredibly warm, charismatic human being. Each time he came back, he was a bigger, more generous person—one who kept growing more passionate about and dedicated to about the art form. Directors would call me about him and tell me, ‘He’s fabulous,’ and kept hiring him again and again.”

Clark-Price’s wife, Erin Moon, was by his side, along with his brother, Stuart, when he died. Moon says, “The best way all of us can honor Stafford’s memory is by helping all beings in all the ways he did, all the ways he wanted to, and all the ways we can imagine.”
Want to know more about *Humor Abuse* and take away a momento with 16 historical Pickle Family Circus photographs?

Pick up *Words on Plays*, the smart souvenir! *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.’s in-depth performance guide series, offers insight into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the A.C.T. subscription season.

*Words on Plays* for *Humor Abuse* includes:

- An in-depth look at Lorenzo Pisoni’s childhood in the circus and the origins and evolution of *Humor Abuse*
- An interview with *Humor Abuse* director and cocreator Erica Schmidt
- Interviews with Lorenzo’s parents, Pickle Family Circus cofounders Larry Pisoni and Peggy Snider
- Detailed histories of the Pickle Family Circus and the circus clown

Individual copies of *Words on Plays* are available for purchase in our lobby, at the bars, and online, where you can also buy digital editions. Subscriptions to *Words on Plays* are available at a discounted price that includes postage for mailing each issue to your home before the performance.

Each purchase of *Words on Plays* helps support A.C.T.’s *Theater in Schools* programs, which distribute *Words on Plays* and student guides to teachers and students around the Bay Area free of charge. Extend the love of theater to future generations, while learning more about *Humor Abuse*.

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LORENZO PISONI (Cocreator/Performer) was last seen at A.C.T. in The Gamester. His Broadway credits include Equus (Broadhurst Theater) and Henry IV (Lincoln Center Theater). Off-Broadway credits include Measure for Measure, All’s Well That Ends Well, Much Ado About Nothing, and As You Like It (The Public Theater/NYSF); Humor Abuse and Last Dance (Manhattan Theatre Club); Election Day (Second Stage Theatre); The Devil’s Disciple (The Irish Repertory Theatre); and Troilus and Cressida (Theatre for a New Audience). Selected regional credits include Tuesdays with Morrie, The Great Gatsby, and Humor Abuse (Seattle Repertory Theatre); The Injured Party (South Coast Repertory); The Tempest (McCarter Theatre Center); and Arms and the Man (Barrington Stage Company). Film and television credits include The Adjustment Bureau, Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, and All My Children. Other selected credits include A Midsummer Night’s Dream (New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center), the Pickle Family Circus, and Cirque du Soleil. Pisoni graduated from Vassar College; selected honors include Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, OBIE, and Outer Critics Circle awards.

ERICA SCHMIDT’s (Director/Cocreator) credits include Invasion! (The Play Company; OBIE Award); Honey Brown Eyes (The Working Theater); The Burnt Part Boys (Vineyard Theatre, New York Stage and Film); Humor Abuse (Manhattan Theatre Club, Seattle Repertory Theatre; Lucille Lortel, Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, and OBIE awards); Rent (Tokyo); Chekhov’s Uncle Vanya, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Sorcerer, and Copland’s The Tender Land (Bard College’s SummerScape); Carnival (Paper Mill Playhouse); People Be Heard (Playwrights Horizons); Trust (The Play Company; Joe A. Callaway Award nomination); As You Like It (The Public Theater/NYSF); chashama and The New York International Fringe Festival 2000 winner for Best Direction); Debbie Does Dallas, which she adapted and directed (off-Broadway’s Jane Street Theatre); Spanish Girl (Second Stage Theatre Uptown); R&J and Buried Child (The Juilliard School); and Fair Ladies at a Game of Poem Cards (McCarter Theatre Center). Schmidt is a 2001 recipient of the Princess Grace Award.

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The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
Who’s Who

BEN STANTON (Lighting Designer), based in Brooklyn, New York, has designed lighting for theater, dance, and concerts over the past 14 years throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. Recent projects include Angels in America (dir. Michael Greif, Signature Theatre Company); The Whipping Man (dir. Doug Hughes, Manhattan Theatre Club), for which he received a Lucille Lortel Award and Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Lighting Design; and Sufjan Stevens’s Age of Adz (European tour and Prospect Park Bandshell). In New York, Stanton has designed at The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Roundabout Underground, Signature Theatre, MCC Theater, Vineyard Theatre, Primary Stages, The Kitchen, Daryl Roth Theatre, Edge Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, and The StageFARM. Regional theater credits include work at the Mark Taper Forum, Long Wharf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, Dallas Theater Center, South Coast Repertory, the Huntington Theatre Company, Philadelphia Theatre Company, McCarter Theatre Center, Intiman Theatre, Paper Mill Playhouse, Westport Country Playhouse, Hartford Stage, Actors Theater of Louisville, the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Chautauqua Theater Company, Bay Street Theatre, New York Stage and Film, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

HANNAH COHEN’s (Stage Manager) off-Broadway credits include Humor Abuse, That Face, and Cradle and All (Manhattan Theatre Club); After the Revolution (Playwrights Horizons); The Burnt Part Boys (Vineyard Theatre, New York Stage and Film); This Beautiful City (Center Theatre Group, Vineyard Theatre); Indian Blood (Primary Stages); The Mistakes Madeline Made (Naked Angels); The Wooden Breeks (MCC Theater), and Slash Heap (Cherry Lane Theatre). Cohen has toured with Sweeney Todd (Richard Frankel Productions) and SpongeBob Squarepants Live! (Broadway Asia Entertainment). Regional credits include Humor Abuse (Philadelphia Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre); Touch(ed), After the Revolution, Landscape of the Body, and Travesties (Williamstown Theatre Festival); Boston Marriage (Guthrie Theater); and The Rose Tattoo and Persephone (Huntington Theatre Company). She is a graduate of Boston University’s School of Theatre.

BART FASBENDER (Sound Designer) has worked with Erica Schmidt on Honey Brown Eyes (The Working Theater), Invasion! and Trust (The Play Company), Slag Heap (Cherry Lane Theatre), Spanish Girl (Second Stage Theatre Uptown), Don’t Blink (The Directors Company), Top Girls (Fordham University), and Arms and the Man (Barrington Stage Company). New York credits include Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson on Broadway, Blood from a Stone (The New Group), Apple Cope (Women’s Project), Three Changes and Drunked City (Playwrights Horizons), Graceland (LCT3), Mr. & Mrs. Fitz (Second Stage Theatre), The Aliens (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), Port Authority (Atlantic Theater Company), A Body of Water (Primary Stages), and Boozy, Hoddatron, and Hell House (St. Ann’s Warehouse/Les Freres Corbusier). Regionally, Fasbender has designed for the Williamstown Theatre Festival, New York Stage and Film, Barrington Stage Company, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Center Theatre Group (Kirk Douglas Theater), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Two River Theater Company, and TheaterWorks. Fasbender is the recipient of a Hewes Design Award nomination.

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
Who’s Who

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB (Assistant Stage Manager) is in his 18th season at A.C.T., where his recent credits include Race, The Homecoming, Scapin, Phèdre, Rock ’n’ Roll, ’Tis Pity She’s a Whore, and Sweeney Todd. In addition to a long association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, his other work includes productions for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, Boston’s Huntington Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Marin Theatre Company. He served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

SEATTLE REPERTORY THEATRE, founded in 1963, is led by Artistic Director Jerry Manning and Managing Director Benjamin Moore. One of America’s premier nonprofit resident theaters, Seattle Repertory Theatre has achieved international renown for its consistently high production and artistic standards and was awarded the 1990 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. With an emphasis on entertaining plays of true dramatic and literary worth, Seattle Rep produces a season of plays along with educational programs, new play workshops, and special presentations.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Ben Krall, Assistant to Mr. Stanton
Terry Lorant, Photographic Images
Randall Craig, “Larry’s Memory”
Brian Fauska, Scenic Coordinator
Denise Damico, Costume Coordinator

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CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is celebrating her 20th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed The Homecoming, The Yacca Project (co-created with choreographer Val Caniparoli and currently touring Canada), and Racine’s Phèdre. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has also directed for A.C.T. José River’s Bolero for the Disenchanted, the world premieres of Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War (A.C.T. commission) and her own adaptation (with Paul Walsh) of A Christmas Carol; the American premieres of Tom Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter’s Celebration; A.C.T.-commissioned translations/ adaptations of Hecuba, The Misanthrope, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, Uncle Vanya, and A Mother, The Voysey Inheritance (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Boy; and major revivals of ‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore, The Government Inspector, Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), A Doll’s House, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Creditors, The Room, Home, The Tempest, and Stoppard’s Rock ‘n’ Roll, Tristessies, The Real Thing, Night and Day, and Arcadia. Perloff’s work for A.C.T. also includes Marie Ndiaye’s Hilda, the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s No for an Answer and David Lang/Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colossus of Rhodes (Susan Smith Blackburn Award finalist).

Her play Luminescence Dating premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her play Waiting for the Flood has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage & Film, and Roundabout Theatre Company. Her latest play, Higher, was developed at New York Stage and Film and presented at San Francisco’s Contemporary Jewish Museum in 2010; it won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award and will receive its world premiere in February 2012 in San Francisco. Her one-act The Morning After was a finalist for the Heideman Award at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Perloff has collaborated as a director on new plays by many notable writers, including Gotanda, Nilo Cruz, and Robert O’Hara. She also recently directed a new Elektra for the Getty Villa in Los Angeles.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound’s Elektra, the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language, and many classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, CSC won numerous OBIE Awards, including the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot’s opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music. A recipient of France’s Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund’s 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.

ELLEN RICHARD (Executive Director) joined A.C.T. as executive director in August 2010. She served previously as executive director of off Broadway’s nonprofit Second Stage Theatre in New York City. During her tenure at Second Stage, she was responsible for the purchase contract of the Helen Hayes Theatre and substantial growth in subscription income and growth in individual giving. Under Richard’s leadership, Second Stage provided the initial home for the Broadway productions Everyday Rapture, Next to Normal, and The Little Dog Laughed.

From 1983 to 2005, Richard enjoyed a rich and varied career with Roundabout Theatre Company. By the time she departed as managing director, Roundabout had been transformed from a small nonprofit on the verge of bankruptcy into one of the country’s largest and most successful theater companies of its kind. Richard is the recipient of six Tony Awards as producer, for Roundabout productions of Cabaret (1998), A View from the Bridge (1998), Side Man (1999), Nine (2003), Assassins (2004), and Glengarry Glen Ross (2005). Producer of more than 125 shows at Roundabout, she had direct supervision of all general and production management, marketing, and financial aspects of the theater’s operations. She conceptualized and oversaw the redesign of the three permanent Roundabout stages—Studio 54, the American Airlines Theatre, and the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre. She directed the location search for Cabaret and supervised the creation of that production’s environmental Kit Kat Klub.

Prior to her tenure at Roundabout, Richard served as business manager of Westport Country Playhouse, theater manager for Stamford Center for the Arts, and business manager for Atlas Scenic Studio. She began her career working as a stagehand, sound designer, and scenic artist assistant.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. in 1995, Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in venues around the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. In 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Continental Divide. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.
producers circle

Frannie Fleishhacker, Co-chair * Deedee McMurtry, Co-chair * Lesley Clement, Co-chair

Producers Circle members make annual gifts of $12,000 or more to A.C.T. Their extraordinary generosity supports season productions, actor training in our conservatory, and arts education in our community. Members are invited to participate in the artistic development of A.C.T.’s season by attending production meetings and taking part in numerous behind-the-scenes opportunities. We are privileged to recognize these members’ generosity during the October 1, 2010–November 30, 2011, period. For information about membership, please contact Jonathan Frappier at 415.439.2353 or jfrappier@act-sf.org.

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Sabrina Lazarus, Jaime McKibben, Stage Management Fellows

**Scenic Shop**

Mark Luuva, Shop Foreman

Russel Souza, Assistant Shop Foreman

Qiqi Fry, Jonathan Young, Merchandizer

Tim Heaney, Purchasing Agent

**Paint Shop**

Jenni Benes, Charge Scenic Artist

B. J. Frederickson, Letty Samonte, Scenic Artists

**Prop Shop**

Ryan L. Parham, Supervisor

Amanda Heath, Assistant

Beth Wengr, Props Fellow

**Costume Shop**

David F. Draper, Manager

Jessie Armoso, Design Assistant

Keely Weinman, Draper / Foreperson

Them Ma, Tailor

Maria Montoya, Head Stitcher

Kiley Koehn, Accessories & Craft Artist

Timothy Mallo, Costumes Fellow

**Wig Shop**

Jeanne Parham, Wig Master

**Stage Staff**

Susanna Bailey, Head Sound

Miguel Onggin, Head Carpenter

Mark Pugh, Head Properties

Tim Wilson, Head Electrician

Per Bjornstad, Flyman

Jessica Hinel, Wardrobe Supervisor

Mary Montijo, Wardrobe Assistant

**Conservatory/Second Stage**

Mark Robinson, Conservatory Production Manager & Technical Director

Sarah Phylkitt, Conservatory Technical Director

**Costume Rentals**

Callie Floor, Supervisor

Amanda Angott, Rental Fellow

**ADMINISTRATION and FINANCE**

Dianne Prichard, Company Manager

Kate Stewart, Human Resources Manager

Caress Capaza, Executive Assistant and Board Assistant

**Finance**

Jason Steifer, Finance Director

Shawn Boyce, Matt Jones, Linda Lauter, Finance Associates

**Development**

Matt Henry, Director of Development

Jonathan Frappier, Associate Director of Development—Individual Giving

Stephanie L. Mazom, Associate Director of Development—Institutional Giving

Joanna Copley, Assistant to the Directors of Development

Hilary Davis, Development Associate

Libbie Hadas, Grant Writer

Melinda Beth Lechman, Donor Stewardship Manager

Tobias Paige, Donor Systems Coordinator

Luz Perex, Special Events Manager

Helen Rigby, Conservatory Development Manager

**Information Technology**

Thomas Morgan, Director

Joanne Pujat, Network Administrator

**Marketing & Public Relations**

Randy Tsurudah, Associate Director of Marketing and Promotion

Edward Bushworth, Group Sales and SMART Representative

Sarah Iuliano, Web and Social Media Manager

Sharon Rietkerk, Marketing Project Manager

**Ticket Services**

Daryl Washington, Ticketing and Audience Services Manager

Mark C. Peters, Subscriptions Manager

David Englemann, Head Treasurer

Joseph Rich, Head Box Office Usher

Doris Yamashiki, Subscriptions Coordinator

Alphonse Alarcon, Peter Davey, Linda Gentile, Elizabeth Haberlin, Alberta Mischke, Johnny Moreno, Joseph Rich, Sam Kekoa Wilson, Treasurers

**Front of House**

Alana Coby, Front of House Assistant

Janeva Devila, Kristin Reyda, House Managers

Christine Call, Head Bartender

Olivier Sutton, Security

Eva Ramos, Audience Service Representative

Susan Allen, Margaret Cahill, Kathy Dene, Sarah Doherty, Larry Emms, Doris Flann, Sabrina Housham, Mark Hueske, Kirk Johnson, Kristen Jones, Minnie Matsuda, Lovettne Mbelie-Mbong, Christine Miller, Jane Pendrey, Tuesday Ray, Kristin Reyda, George Scott, Audrey Shuster, Chase Wilson, Ushe

Max Rosenblum, Matt Miller, Tracey Sylvester, Danny Webber, Andy Westhoff, Bartenders

**Operations**

Lesley Pierce, Operations Manager

Len Lucas, Jeffrey Warren, Assistant Facilities Managers

Joe Virgil, Facilities Crew

Curtis Carr, Jr., Jamie McGram, Security

Jaime Morales, Grear Cleaning Foreman

Jamel Abiadi, Lida Godinez, Jahir Mohammed, Grear Cleaning Crew

**EDUCATION**

Elizabeth Brodersen, Director of Education

Dan Rubin, Publications Manager

Emily Hoffman, Publications & Dramaturgy Associate

Emily Means, Publications & Education Fellow

**CONSERVATORY**

Craig Slaght, Young Conservatory Director

Andrew Hurreau, Director of Studio A.C.T.

Christopher Yelverton, Director of Summer Training Congress

Jack Shock, Director of Academic Affairs

Jerry Lopez, Director of Financial Aid

Hannah Cohen, Conservatory Manager

Dick Daley, Conservatory Producer

Lauren Ros, Conservatory Associate

Matt Jones, Barlow/Peayrdell Administrator

**Master of Fine Arts Program Core Faculty**

René Augensen, Acting

Nancy Benjamin, Co-Head of Voice and Dialect, Director

Stephen Birnholz, Head of Movement, Director

Jeffrey Crockett, Head of Voice

Manoel Felciano, Acting, Director

Anthony Fusco, Acting, Director

Domenique Lozano, Acting, Director

Frank Ottiwell, Acting, Director

Manoel Felciano, Stephen Buescher, Nancy Benjamin, Co-Head of Voice and Text, and Dialect

**M.F.A. Program Adjunct Faculty**

Marco Barcelli, Director

Barbara Damahek, Director

Margo Hall, Acting

Giles Havergal, Director

Mark Jackson, Director

Jonathan Macscene, Acting

Kari Pittula, Alexander Technique

Robert Butt, Singing

Elyse Shafarman, Alexander Technique

Erika Chong Shuch, Director

Craig Slaight, Director

Dan Wolf, Director

**STUDIO A.C.T.**

Rachael Adler, Acting

Cyndi Gold, Acting

Paul Finocchiaro, Acting

Mark Rafael, Acting

Patrick Russell, Acting

Vivian Sam, Musical Theater, Dance

Betty Schneider, Musical Theater

Craig Slaight, Director, Acting

Amelia Stewart, Director, Acting

Krista Wigle, Musical Theater

**YC Accompanists**

Thaddeus Pinkston, Robert Butt

**Library Staff**

Joseph Tally, Head Librarian

G. David Anderson, Elena Balashova, Laurie Bernstein, John Borden, David Bowie, Joan Cahill, Barbara Cohsen, William Goldstein, Pat Hunter, Connie Ikert, Martha Kessler, Nelda Kilgus, Barbara Korstein, Ines Lewandowski, Richard Maggi, Ann Morales, Patricia O’Connell, Roy Ortopano, Art Persky, Dana Rees, Beverly Saha, Roger Silver, Marianne Sullivan, Jane Taber, Sam Thal, Jean Wilson, Nancy Zanin, Library Volunteers

A.C.T. thanks the physicians and staff of the Centers for Sports Medicine, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, for their care of the A.C.T. company: Dr. James Garrick, Dr. Victor Prieto, Dr. Minx Hong, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corpus.

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**For Your Information**

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**
A.C.T.’s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the web: act-sf.org.

**BOX OFFICE INFORMATION**

A.C.T. Box Office
Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square. Walk-up hours are Tuesday–Sunday (noon–curtain) on performance days, and Monday–Friday (noon–6 p.m.) and Saturday–Sunday (noon–4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. **Phone hours** are Tuesday–Sunday (10 a.m.–curtain) on performance days, and Monday–Friday (10 a.m.–6 p.m.) and Saturday–Sunday (10 a.m.–4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Call 415.749.2228 and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard; or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our website at act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy ticket exchange privileges and ticket insurance. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250.

A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

**Special Subscription Discounts**
Educators, administrators, and students receive a 50% discount with valid ID. **10UP subscribers** get priority access to Balcony seats at certain performances for just $10 each. **Seniors** (65+) save $40 on eight plays, $35 on seven plays, $30 on six plays, $25 on five plays, or $20 on four plays for Saturday and Sunday matinee packages. **Single Ticket Discounts**

**10UP** (world-class theater at happy-hour prices) offers $10 Balcony seats for select performances. **Half-price student and senior rush tickets** are available at the A.C.T. Box Office two hours before curtain. **Matinee senior rush tickets** are available at noon on the day of the performance for $20. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

**Group Discounts**
The bigger the group, the bigger the savings—save up to 50%! For groups of 10 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.439.2473.

**AT THE THEATER**
The American Conservatory Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The lobby opens one hour before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour before curtain. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

**A.C.T. Merchandise**
A.C.T.–branded merchandise, as well as books, scripts, and **Words on Plays**, are on sale in the main lobby, at the box office, and online.

**Refreshments**
Full bar service, sweets, and savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred’s Columbia Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third level. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Bar drinks are now permitted in the auditorium.

**Cell Phones!**
If you carry a pager, beeper, cell phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the “off” position while you are in the theater. Text messaging during the performance is very disruptive and not allowed.

**Perfumes**
The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented after-shave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe physical reactions in some individuals. As a courtesy to fellow patrons, please avoid the use of these products when you attend the theater.

**Emergency Telephone**
Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2317 in an emergency.

**Latecomers**
A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated before the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval.

**Listening Systems**
Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performances. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

**Photographs and recordings** of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

**Restrooms** are located in Fred’s Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

**Wheelchair seating** is available on all levels of the theater. Please call 415.749.2228 in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

A.C.T. is pleased to announce that an **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is now available on site.

**Lost and Found**
If you’ve misplaced an item while you’re still at the theater, please look for it at our merchandise stand in the lobby. Any items found by ushers or other patrons will be taken there. If you’ve already left the theater, please call 415.439.2471 and we’ll be happy to check our lost and found for you. Please be prepared with the date you attended the performance and your seat location.

**AFFILIATIONS**
A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of Theatre Bay Area, the Union Square Association, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.

A.C.T. operates under an agreement with the League of Resident Theatres and Actor’s Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

The scenic shop, prop shop, and stage crew are represented by Local 16 of the IATSE.

A.C.T. is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.
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